

Administration of Barack Obama, 2013

**Remarks Following a Tour of the Maison des Esclaves on Goree Island,
Senegal**

June 27, 2013

Hey! Well, the—I want to thank the President of Senegal, but also the mayor of Goree and the museum curator here. Obviously, it's a very powerful moment whenever I can travel with my family, but especially for Michelle and Malia and my mother-in-law to be able to come here and to fully appreciate the magnitude of the slave trade, to get a sense, in a very intimate way, of the incredible inhumanity and hardship that people faced before they made the Middle Passage and that crossing.

And I think more than anything, what it reminds us of is that we have to remain vigilant when it comes to the defense of people's human rights, because I'm a firm believer that humanity is fundamentally good, but it's only good when good people stand up for what's right. And this is a testament to, when we're not vigilant in defense of what's right, what can happen.

And so it's always powerful for me to visit countries outside of the United States generally, but obviously, for an African American—and an African American President—to be able to visit this site, I think, gives me even greater motivation in terms of the defense of human rights around the world. All right?

Thank you, guys.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:33 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to President Macky Sall of Senegal; Mayor Augustin Senghor of Goree, Senegal; and Eloi Coly, museum curator, Maison des Esclaves de Goree. He also referred to his mother-in-law Marian Robinson.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Senegal, tour of Maison des Esclaves on Goree Island.

Locations: Goree Island, Senegal.

Names: Coly, Eloi; Obama, Malia; Obama, Michelle; Robinson, Marian; Sall, Macky; Senghor, Augustin.

Subjects: Foreign policy, U.S. : Civil and human rights, promotion efforts; Senegal : Maison des Esclaves on Goree Island; Senegal : President; Senegal : President Obama's visit.

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